

Message Text

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16

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-04 IO-14 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 OMB-01 OPR-02

AF-10 EB-11 DRC-01 /172 W
----- 083224

P 100601Z DEC 73

FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9775

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY

AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PK, BG

SUBJECT: STUDENTS, ISLAMIC SUMMIT CONFERENCE, AND GOP
RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH

REF: ISLAMABAD 10581

BEGIN SUMMARY: REACTING TO RUMORS THAT GOP RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH IS IMMINENT, OPPOSITION PARTIES HAVE REPORTEDLY INITIATED DRIVE TO TURN CURRENT STUDENT UNREST INTO CAMPAIGN TO BLOCK BOTH RECOGNITION AND INVITATION OF BANGLADESH REPRESENTATIVES TO ISLAMIC SUMMIT. END SUMMARY.

1. IN LATE AFTERNOON OF DEC 7, SEVERAL GROUPS OF STUDENTS GATECRASHED INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT PUNJAB UNIVERSITY ABOUT TO BE INAUGURATED BY PUNJAB GOVERNOR QURESHI. STUDENTS TOOK OVER DAIS, HARANGUED RATHER FRIGHTENED GOVERNOR (WHO MADE FAST ESCAPE WITH AID OF POLICE) AND CAUSED CANCELLATION
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OF MEETING. GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PRESS DESCRIBED INCIDENT

IN SOME DETAIL, BUT FAILED TO MENTION STUDENT DEMANDS ARTICULATED ON THAT OCCASION. ACCORDING TO SOURCE WHO ATTENDED ABORTIVE MEETING, PRIME STUDENT SLOGAN WAS AGAINST RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH.

2. AFTER INCIDENT AT PUNJAB UNIVERSITY, MR. JAVED AKHTAR HASHMI, FORMER PRESIDENT OF PUNJAB UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION, AND NOW FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE OF JAMAAT-I-ISLAMI STUDENT WING, ADDRESSED PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE THREATENED VIOLENT STUDENT CAMPAIGN IF STUDENT DEMANDS "REGARDING THE DEATH OF A MULTAN BOY" (SEE LAHORE 1450 NOTAL) WERE NOT ACCEPTED BY DEC 13. HE THREATENED THAT STUDENTS WOULD BLOCK ALL PUBLIC TRANSPORT THROUGHOUT COUNTRY AND THAT, IF STUDENTS WERE SUBJECTED TO FORCE, THEY WOULD REPLY IN KIND. "IF FOUR STUDENTS ARE KILLED, WE SHALL KILL FORTY POLICEMEN," HE DECLARED. ACCORDING TO KNOWLEDGEABLE POLITICAL OBSERVER WHO SPOKE TO SEVERAL REPORTERS WHO ATTENDED PRESS CONFERENCE, HASHMI DID NOT SOUND SO TOUGH BUT DID MAKE ANOTHER DEMAND NOT REPORTED BY PRESS: NOT RECOGNIZE BANGLADESH.

3. OTHER POLITICAL OBSERVERS IN LAHORE POINT TO NUMBER OF INDICATIONS THAT RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH MAY BE IN WIND: ONE PPP MPA IN LAHORE HAS HEARD THAT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL (AGAIN) DEBATE SUBJECT OF BANGLADESH RECOGNITION WEEK OF DEC 10. SAME SOURCE NOTES THAT PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO IS SCHEDULED TO ADDRESS "HISTORIC" PUBLIC MEETING IN LAHORE ON DEC 20, AND SPECULATES THAT BHUTTO WILL USE OCCASION TO ANNOUNCE RECOGNITION. SEVERAL OTHER CONTACTS POINT TO CURRENT TRAVELS OF BHUTTO TO MIDDLE-EASTERN COUNTRIES AND SPECULATES THAT, IN ADDITION TO RAISING SUBJECTS OF OIL AND ARMS, PRIME MINISTER IS EXPLAINING DECISION TO RECOGNIZE BANGLADESH IN IMMEDIATE FUTURE. THESE CONTACTS ARGUE THAT IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO HOLD ISLAMIC SUMMIT MEETING WITHOUT PARTICIPATION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF SECOND MOST POPULOUS ISLAMIC NATION ON EARTH. ONE THOUGHTFUL OBSERVER IN LAHORE BELIEVES BHUTTO ORIGINALLY ATTEMPTED TO INVITE BANGLADESH LEADERS WITHER BY NAME OR AS "LEADERS FROM EASTERN WING", BUT FOUND THIS OFFENSIVE TO DACCA, AND DECIDED TO GO AHEAD WITH LONG-AWAITED RECOGNITION. ONE LAHORE BUSINESSMAN WITH CONTACTS IN JI ASSERTED THAT JI LEADERS HAVE ALREADY DECIDED TO TRY TO BLOCK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ANY GOP MOVE TO INVITE DELEGATES FROM DACCA IN ANY CAPACITY.

4. COMMENT: SINCE POSSIBILITY OF IMMINENT RECOGNITION OF BANGLADESH HAS NOT YET APPEARED IN PUBLIC PRINT IN LAHORE, IT IS TOO EARLY TO ACCURATELY PINPOINT WHAT PUBLIC REACTION WILL BE. HOWEVER, SOME PRIVATE REACTION HAS BEEN HEARD, AND IT IS ALONG FAIRLY PREDICTABLE LINES. CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION PARTIES SUCH AS JAMAAT-I-ISLAMI CAN BE EXPECTED TO USE

ALL RESOURCES, INCLUDING STUDENTS JI EFFECTIVELY MANEUVERS,
TO TRY TO BLOCK MOVE. THE RELATIVELY FEW ELITES WITH WHOM
WE HAVE DISCUSSED SUBJECT OVER WEEKEND SEEM TO BE ROUGHLY
DIVIDED FIFTY-FIFTY, BUT ALMOST ALL AGREE THAT, IF BHUTTO
DECIDES TO RECOGNIZE BANGLADESH NOW, PUNJABIS WILL ACCEPT DE-
CISION WITH RELATIVE EQUANIMITY. END COMMENT.
GRIFFIN

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